

### WALL STREET PUSHES BACK ON REGULATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PORTER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. PORTER. Madam Speaker, back in 2017, I took a public stand against Wall Street and its efforts to roll back the financial regulations put in place after the 2008 financial crisis. I opposed S. 2155, a deregulatory bill that ultimately passed into law.

Then, in 2017 and 2018, I was running for Congress for the first time in a politically divided district. Standing against Wall Street wasn't a safe position to take. In fact, that is why too many Republican and Democratic lawmakers alike ended up supporting S. 2155. It was seen as safer to be pro-business.

Every real capitalist knows there is nothing pro-business about a bank failure. That is why, in 2010, Congress passed strong regulations to keep our economy stable, our banks viable, and our businesses growing. Just 8 years later, in 2018, Washington, D.C., reversed course and passed S. 2155 at Wall Street's behest.

How did we get from this deregulation to the recent Silicon Valley Bank failure, the biggest bank failure in over a decade?

In short, S. 2155 made it lawful for Silicon Valley Bank to leave itself vulnerable when depositors wanted their money back faster than the bank could pay it out.

When you walk into a bank, Madam Speaker, and you deposit \$100, the bank takes most of that \$100 and invests it. They buy securities and bonds. They don't just have your \$100 sitting around. However, the bank is supposed to hang on to a big enough portion of that deposit so that if you want your money back, they can give it to you. It is straightforward when a couple of people come in and want their money, but sometimes a lot of people want all of their money all at once.

Why wasn't Silicon Valley Bank prepared for that scenario?

The bank's recent failure is a deregulation problem. Title IV of S. 2155 raised the asset threshold at which a bank is considered and regulated as a systemically important bank. What we saw in Silicon Valley Bank and other similarly sized banks is a result of Congress' own actions in 2018 when they were removed from these enhanced liquidity requirement stress testing and other safety and soundness rules.

Because of these lax regulations, when push came to shove, Silicon Valley Bank hadn't kept enough liquid assets to pay out the dollars being drawn out. If Dodd-Frank were still applied to banks of that size, then Silicon Valley Bank wouldn't have been able to put its own profits over the stability of our banking system and our economy.

Let's not give banks that choice again. When Silicon Valley Bank collapsed, Senator ELIZABETH WARREN and I partnered on legislation to restore

the regulations that were directly implemented as a result of lessons learned during the 2008 financial crisis, not on the politics of the moment or the political power of the bank lobby.

Our new bill, the Secure Viable Banking Act, the SVB Act, would repeal title IV of S. 2155. It would restore Dodd-Frank regulations as they are applied to banks the same size as Silicon Valley Bank.

Banking failures are bad. We should all be able to come together and agree that systemically significant banks need regulations to limit the risks of failure and to reduce the harmful consequences when a bank does fail.

Let's agree to let Silicon Valley Bank be our last hard lesson. Let's not swing regulations back and forth with the political tides and whims of lobbyists. Let's, instead, keep rules in place that deliver a well-regulated, stable, and growing economy.

My SVB Act would do that.

Madam Speaker, I urge Members to support the bill that creates a banking system that works for all of us, not just one that boosts banks' bottom lines.

### CELEBRATING EDUCATION AND SHARING DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. MOLINARO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOLINARO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize April 2 as Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson Education and Sharing Day.

April 2 is the Rebbe's birthday, and Rabbi Schneerson believed that education was not just about acquiring knowledge but also about developing a strong moral compass. He saw education as a tool for building a healthy and prosperous society, one that values compassion, justice, and kindness.

His vision has inspired countless individuals around the world to pursue excellence in education and to better serve their communities.

Through his tireless efforts, the Rebbe established over 5,500 educational and social institutions across the United States and in more than 100 countries. These institutions have empowered young people to reach their full potential and make a positive impact on society.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in the House join me in celebrating Education and Sharing Day by reflecting on the Rebbe's legacy and commitment to education.

### RECOGNIZING AUTISM AWARENESS DAY

Mr. MOLINARO. Madam Speaker, today, I rise to recognize Autism Awareness Day, a day that promotes understanding and acceptance of individuals on the autism spectrum.

Autism is a complex neurological disorder that affects millions of individuals across the United States. It is also a spectrum disorder, which means each person's challenges can vary significantly.

As the father of four children, one of whom lives on the autism spectrum, this is deeply personal to me. April 2 is my daughter Abigail's birthday.

Happy birthday to her.

Before coming to Congress, I founded the ThinkDIFFERENTLY initiative in my home State to break down barriers and open opportunities for individuals with physical, intellectual, and developmental disabilities.

In Congress, we are working in a bipartisan way to expand on this effort. I started by introducing the Think Differently Database Act, which creates a comprehensive website of resources for individuals with disabilities.

This is just the beginning. We must do more to increase funding for autism research, expand access to early intervention services, and support families through education and outreach programs. These efforts will promote greater inclusivity and understanding and help every person of every ability reach their fullest potential.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing Autism Awareness Day and continue supporting this critical work of breaking down barriers and creating opportunities for everyone of every ability.

### CALIFORNIA UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FUND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. KILEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KILEY. Madam Speaker, currently, California businesses are facing a significant tax increase, thanks in part to a high-ranking State official who allowed the tax dollars they had already paid to be stolen. It is an incompetence tax, a price private citizens are being forced to pay for their government's failures.

I would like to take a moment to explain how this happened, but I will lead with the punch line: The State official who squandered these funds, allowing a fraud of historic proportions, is somehow now up for a major promotion.

President Biden has nominated Julie Su, former head of the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency, to be the next U.S. Secretary of Labor.

The predicament that small businesses in California now find themselves in—facing double taxation to compensate for the government's singular negligence—is another example of why this nomination is so ill-considered. It is a warning as to what all Americans have in store if Julie Su is confirmed.

Stepping back, the California Unemployment Insurance Fund is the source for paying out unemployment insurance claims honored by California's unemployment office, known as the EDD.

The fund is ordinarily maintained through a tax levied on California businesses. New employers are assigned a 3.4 percent UI rate for 2 to 3 years. After that, a business' contribution tax varies. It is somewhere between 1.5 and 6.2 percent for the current year.

In times of economic duress, when the fund is paying out significantly more than is coming in, the Federal Government has the option of loaning money to States, including California, to cover the payment deficit.

California had to take out such a loan during the COVID business shutdowns and took on by far the most debt of any State. The current debt amounts to \$18.8 billion. This was because of the huge volume of claims, yes, but also because of a staggering amount of fraud.

A coalition letter from dozens of Chambers of Commerce in California notes:

The Employment Development Department proved ill-equipped for the rapid increase in claimants. After numerous oversight hearings and analyses of EDD's failings, it is clear that EDD's failings added further to the UI fund's insolvency in two ways: by failing to prevent fraud and, instead, distributing funds to fraudulent claimants; and by mistakenly distributing overpayments to legitimate claimants. Although EDD and local law enforcement have attempted to recover some of these mistaken distributions, recovery rates appear to be less than 10 percent of the mistaken distributions. In other words, these mistakes at EDD added to the UI fund deficit.

□ 1115

The total scale of EDD fraud in California is estimated at \$32.6 billion. This unprecedented loss was almost entirely preventable if Julie Su had taken basic fraud prevention measures.

A January 2021 report from the California State auditor notes that the EDD fraud occurred for three main reasons:

First, EDD waited about 4 months to automate a key antifraud measure.

Second, EDD allowed claimants to collect benefits even though they were using suspicious addresses. In one case, over 1,700 claims came from a single address.

Third, EDD removed a key safeguard against improper payments without fully understanding the significance of the safeguard.

Further, the State auditor reports that: "Despite repeated warnings, EDD did not bolster its fraud detection efforts until months into the pandemic."

"And it does not reliably track suspicious claims and resolution to determine the effectiveness of its fraud prevention tools."

By the way, if you are wondering where all this money, \$32.6 billion went, the CEO of LexisNexis Risk Solutions has this to say: "Seventy percent of that money left California. It left this country. It went to transnational criminal groups that have used that money for nefarious purposes to harm our democracy. Some of that money has been used in sex trafficking, child extortion."

At this point, California is one of only four States in the country that hasn't repaid its debt to the Federal Government. Now, taxpaying businesses are on the hook. In the case of fund insolvency for 2 consecutive

years—as is the case with California—Federal law mandates an automatic increase in payroll taxes that amounts to \$21 per employee. The tax continues to ratchet up by \$21 per employee each year the fund remains insolvent, with a maximum tax increase of \$434 per employee per year.

Now, one might ask, why did California not repay its debt to the Federal Government last year when it had a \$97.5 billion surplus?

There is no good answer to that question.

I have actually joined with Representative OBERNOLTE to call on California's Governor and legislature to repay the loan so the burden doesn't fall on employers, and I am calling on the United States Senate to consider this a case study in what we don't want for our country.

#### UNSPEAKABLE TRAGEDY IN NASHVILLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. OGLES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. OGLES. Madam Speaker, I rise to remember those lost in an unspeakable tragedy that took place in Nashville at the Covenant School, which is in my district, and to acknowledge the power of prayer.

At approximately 10:13 a.m., evil ran rampant in the halls of the Christian academy and claimed the lives of three children and three staff members:

Hallie Scruggs, age 9;

Evelyn Dieckhaus, age 9;

William Kinney, age 9;

Mike Hill, the school custodian;

Dr. Katherine Koonce, the head of the school; and

Cynthia Peak, a substitute teacher.

These innocent lives were lost in a senseless act of violence.

As a father of three children, I cannot begin to imagine what the families of these six individuals are experiencing right now.

To my fellow Tennesseans in Nashville and the Covenant School, we are here for you. We are sending our deepest and most sincere condolences. My prayers are with each and every one of you.

I also want to recognize the bravery demonstrated by the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department and to all of the first responders who took exemplary steps during this tragic event.

To Officers Rex Engelbert and Michael Collazo, thank you. Your incredible bravery, valor, and courage in the face of danger saved lives.

Our community is broken. To those who are wondering and trying to make sense of the world, the Lord says: "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." Isaiah 41:10.

Please join me for a moment of silence.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF DALE DEES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BEAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BEAN of Florida. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the life and memory of Commissioner Dale Dees from my hometown of Fernandina Beach, Florida.

Mr. Dees reminds me of an Alan Jackson country song, "Small Town Southern Man." He was always proud of what he had, and he was raised on the ways of gentle kindness.

Mr. Dees was a lifelong resident of Fernandina Beach. He came from humble beginnings, and yet he was a man of great influence. His sincerity made everyone feel special.

As a young man, he enlisted in the United States Army, serving Uncle Sam. Once he completed his tour of duty, he devoted himself to his family's dry cleaner business and revolutionized dry cleaning in Fernandina Beach by opening a drive-through option. Eventually, he would open the town's first gun shop. He was a self-made businessman, and he understood the value of hard work.

His pride and joy was his family. Sharon was his beloved wife of 62 years and was his soulmate. Together they were blessed with two children, Mike and Michelle; son-in-law Shawn; two grandchildren, and great-grandson Kamden.

Dale exemplified the meaning of leadership, and he saw public service as a duty. He served two terms as commissioner for Fernandina Beach and strived to make a difference in the lives of everyone in the city.

Fernandina Beach has lost a pillar of its community. Dale will be dearly missed, and our condolences are with his family. He truly was a small town Southern man.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 22 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Eternal God, on this 50th anniversary of the Vietnam war, we pray Your divine blessing on those veterans who left hearth and home to respond to the